

# Wayne Allard

U . S . S E N A T O R • C O L O R A D O

For Release:  
February 16, 2005

Contact: Angela de Rocha  
202-224-5944  
Stephen Myers  
202-224-6207

## **SENATE ENERGY COMMITTEE APPROVES ALLARD BILL TO CREATE RIO GRANDE NATURAL AREA IN SOUTHERN COLORADO**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Senate Energy Committee on Wednesday approved legislation by U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) that would establish the Rio Grande Natural Area. The Natural Area would consist of pristine land encompassing a quarter of a mile on each side of the Rio Grande River extending from the southern boundary of the Alamosa National Wildlife refuge to the New Mexico state line. In addition, the act would prevent a federal water right from being imposed on the protected area.

“The Rio Grande Natural Area Act would designate a pristine area around the Rio Grande River stretching from Alamosa to New Mexico, protecting one of the most beautiful natural areas in our state, and our state’s water rights as well,” Senator Allard said.

“Coloradans have been working toward this legislation for years,” the Senator said. “It represents a collaborative effort among property owners, community members and elected representatives that takes into account key agricultural and environmental concerns. These disparate groups have joined together to protect the San Luis Valley and Colorado’s unique heritage.”

Senator Allard hit the ground running by introducing this legislation on January 24<sup>th</sup> – the first day Senators were able to submit legislation in the new session of Congress. U.S. Senator Ken Salazar is a cosponsor of the legislation. The bill will next go to the full Senate for approval.

#